

Ikmal honorary fellowship for Dr Mahathir

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THE Malaysian Maritime Institute (Ikmal) will present an Honorary Fellowship Award to former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad on March 20 for his tremendous contribution to the development of the country's maritime industry during his tenure.

Ikmal president Capt Jaffar Lamri said through Dr Mahathir's vision and dedication, Malaysia's ports, shipping, logistics and offshore industries had prospered and become among the world's best.

He said Dr Mahathir's contributions included the privatisation of Malaysian ports that led to the emergence of North Port Corporation, Johor Port Sdn Bhd, Penang Port Sdn Bhd, Port of Tanjung Pelepas and Westport.

"The shipping industry has thrived with MISC Bhd leading the pack with the largest LNG fleets in the world and as significant players in the tankers business.

"New shipping companies have also been established including Malaysian Merchant Marine Bhd, Nepline Bhd, Halim Mazmin Bhd, Wawasan Tankers Sdn Bhd and many others.

"The marine offshore business has also shown significant growth in local players which include ALAM Maritim Sdn Bhd, Tanjung Offshore Services Sdn Bhd, Bumi Armada Bhd, Borcos Shipping and Ajang Shipping.

"Local dredging companies like Inai Kiara Sdn Bhd and Tidal Marine Sdn Bhd have benefited and developed under the Government's policy of developing local companies.

"Tun Dr Mahathir's vision has also contributed to the development of Langkawi as a centre for recreational boating, sailing and island tourist destination," said Capt Jaffar.

In the field of human resource development, he said, the establishment of the Malaysian Maritime Academy in Malacca by Dr Mahathir had made it possible for Malaysia to produce its own officers and ratings to man Malaysian ships.

He said as a maritime nation with a long coastline, a trading nation that depended on shipping for the import and export of its goods (more than 85% of import and export are by sea), the Malaysian Government's policy of giving critical emphasis to the maritime industry had benefited the nation.

"Dr Mahathir has been very persistent and passionate in ensuring the development and success of the Malaysian maritime industry. The Malaysian maritime professionals and industry acknowledged the pivotal contributions made by Tun and thus the conferment of the prestigious Honorary Fellow of Ikmal to him is most befitting.

"The conferment will be made by Ikmal royal patron the Sultan of Selangor at a hotel in Putrajaya," he said.

The grand event will be attended by more than 300 leaders of the maritime industry and maritime professionals.